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National Intelligence Bulletin

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OAU-ANGOLA

The Organization of African Unity emergency summit on Angola adjourned early this morning, following a night-long session, without reaching any agreement. Not even a face-saving final resolution was issued.

[redacted] the summit broke up after failing to agree on a last minute compromise proposed by OAU chairman Amin. An official OAU spokesman announced the summit's end to reporters saying that after "seriously considering" the Angolan problem, the conferees had decided to adjourn and to request that an interim standing committee of OAU heads of state appointed by the last regular OAU summit "continue to follow the Angolan problem closely."

The impasse is something of a victory for the backers of the National Front for the Liberation of Angola and the National Union for the Total Independence of Angola since it denies the Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola its immediate goal of gaining official OAU recognition as the sole legitimate government of Angola. On the other hand, the summit failure also probably effectively kills any further OAU efforts to promote a political solution by encouraging the formation of a government of national unity.

The summit failure in effect gives OAU member states a free hand to recognize the Angolan regime of their choice. The Popular Movement's hard-core backers can be expected to step up their campaign in Africa for diplomatic recognition of the Luanda-based regime of Agostinho Neto. They will probably try to force the recognition issue again at the regularly scheduled OAU summit meeting this summer.

The Popular Movement has the diplomatic edge at present, having been recognized by 21 OAU member states; no government has recognized the rival joint regime proclaimed by the National Front and National Union.

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ICELAND-UK-NATO

Icelandic disappointment with the results of yesterday's emergency meeting of the North Atlantic Council could lead Reykjavik to break relations with the UK and to withdraw its delegation to NATO.

Icelandic officials warned that it was "essential" for NATO members to indicate support for Iceland. The assembled ambassadors merely urged Britain and Iceland to exercise restraint in the dispute.

NATO also agreed to send Secretary General Luns, who helped mediate a settlement of the last cod war in 1973, to Reykjavik for talks with government leaders. Prime Minister Hallgrimsson may urge the cabinet to hold off until Luns has had a chance to act.

Hallgrimsson has said that Luns should not be sent to mediate the current dispute and warned that domestic opinion would not allow him to negotiate while British frigates remained in Icelandic waters. Instead, Hallgrimsson urged that Luns visit Reykjavik on a fact-finding mission prior to another NATO meeting that would consider further measures.

Despite Hallgrimsson's efforts to postpone a break in relations with London, the cabinet appears ready to act once the special maritime court fixes the blame for an incident last week between a British frigate and an Icelandic patrol. The court, boycotted by the UK, is almost certain to rule against the UK. Reykjavik has already requested Norway to monitor its interests in Britain when the break occurs.

Hallgrimsson told the US ambassador last weekend that anti-NATO sentiment is stronger now in Iceland than during the campaign in 1973 to close down the US-manned NATO base at Keflavik. Meanwhile, Icelandic fishermen have abandoned their blockade of a NATO communications facility at Grindavik but have threatened to return if the US does not provide assistance to Iceland against British "violence."

Hallgrimsson's moderate line in the dispute appears to be hurting him politically. He said that he is losing support both within his own Independence Party and with the Progressive Party, the junior coalition party. Hallgrimsson suggested that unless he takes a stronger position, the Progressive Party was ready to abandon the coalition and bring down the government.

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PORTUGAL

A growing protest movement of small farmers in northern Portugal over the controversial land reform issue is indicative of the increasing influence and boldness of the political right in recent weeks.

Despite recent attempts by the government to reassure small landowners who fear expropriation, thousands of farmers gathered in the northern city of Braga on Sunday to demand an end to the current land reform program. The farmers' specific demands included:

- Suspension of the present agrarian reform law and formulation of a new one by the legislative assembly to be elected in April.

- A public debate on land reform with both farmers' and rural workers' associations and the political parties participating.

- Purges of Communist workers at local agrarian reform centers.

The farmers, who accused Socialist Agriculture Minister Lopes Cardoso of pursuing a policy of land collectivization, called for another demonstration for Wednesday in a town some 50 miles north of Lisbon. They promised further action if their demands are not met by February 2. Some rally organizers implied that an earlier threat to withhold farm produce from the capital might be implemented if the government does not agree to their demands. Such a boycott would pose serious problems for the government in Lisbon, which is already plagued by shortages and skyrocketing food prices.

Early last week the Socialist, Communist, and Popular Democratic parties—all members of the present government—reached an agreement on proposed modifications in an attempt to moderate the agrarian reform program. On Thursday, however, perhaps in anticipation of the farmers' meeting, the centrist Popular Democrats issued a communique in an attempt to put some distance between themselves and the Communists and Socialists on the agrarian reform issue.

The Popular Democrats will find themselves under increasing pressure to accommodate the farmers in the north, which is the party's political stronghold. Indeed, competition for northern votes from the conservative Social Democratic Center, which has already joined the farmers in denouncing the government's program, already seems to be pulling the Popular Democrats to the right.

Such pressures can only add to the strains on the already uneasy alliance of political forces in the present government.

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USSR

The Soviets have issued invitations to the Greeks and the Turks to observe, from February 1 to 4, the recently announced corps-level exercise Caucasus.

Caucasus is scheduled to be conducted from January 25 to February 6 in the Transcaucasus Military District bordering Turkey and Iran. According to Moscow, the exercise will involve "about 25,000" troops. Other invitations have gone to Romania and Bulgaria, both Warsaw Pact members, and to Yugoslavia, a nonaligned state.

[redacted] the invitations were made on the "territorial principle," i.e., only to those countries in close proximity to the exercise area. The Warsaw Pact states ignored invitations to attend NATO exercises after the end of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe, and Moscow appears to have preferred to avoid precedents for across-the-board, inter-bloc hospitality.

Under the terms of the CSCE accord, participating states are to invite other participating states, voluntarily and on a bilateral basis, to send observers to military maneuvers. The inviting state determines, in each case, the number of observers and the procedures and conditions of their participation and provides other information it may consider useful.

Moscow's willingness to implement the confidence-building measures called for at Helsinki in this manner may be an attempt to counter Western criticisms of Moscow's observance of the "human contacts" provisions of the accord. It may also be intended to improve the atmosphere for the force reductions talks, which will resume in Vienna late this month.

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THAILAND

King Phumiphon signed a royal decree dissolving the National Assembly on the advice of Prime Minister Khukrit yesterday. Khukrit will remain head of a caretaker administration until a general election is held on April 4.

Khukrit opted for new elections when he concluded that his effort to maintain his coalition by enlarging the cabinet was failing. Khukrit's government has been plagued from the start by disagreement over the allocation of cabinet portfolios. In a nationwide address defending his decision, the Prime Minister argued that any other coalition would have encountered the same difficulty and cited the need to reduce the present unwieldy number of political parties (22) in the assembly.

Thailand will now be faced with at least three more months of weak and indecisive government. Presumably, Khukrit will exploit his control over the government's election machinery to strengthen his own Social Action Party, but his resumption of the prime ministership following a new election is not a foregone conclusion.

Retired army commander Krit Siwara, who was instrumental in stimulating the present crisis, is likely to run for a seat in the assembly in order to become eligible for a cabinet position or the prime ministership. If Krit does throw his hat in the ring, the military may be content to remain in the background in the belief that Krit would protect their interests.

Dissolution of the parliament probably will not affect the withdrawal of US forces, but it seems likely to restrict Thai ability to reach new agreements with the US before the election. Thai politicians may make an election issue of relations with the US. Most conservatives, such as Krit, consider the US relationship fundamental to Thailand's security. Socialist politicians, however, are demanding a neutralist foreign policy that would not permit any US military role in Thailand. The socialists could increase their strength in the coming election, but senior Thai military leaders have made it clear they cannot accept a socialist coalition government.

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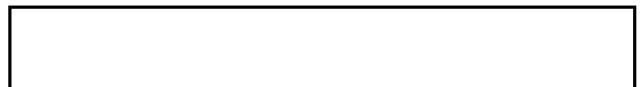
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